Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of the claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): An immunogenic conjugate comprising [[a]] a synthetic homopolymer ~~polypeptide~~ of poly-γ-glutamic acid (γPGA) polypeptide covalently linked to a carrier, wherein the conjugate elicits an immune response in a subject.

Claim 2 (previously presented): The conjugate of claim 1, wherein the conjugate comprises a γPGA polypeptide comprising 5-20 glutamic acid residues.

Claim 3 (original): The conjugate of claim 1, wherein the conjugate comprises a γPGA polypeptide comprising 10-15 glutamic acid residues.

Claim 4 (original): The conjugate of claim 1, wherein the conjugate comprises a decameric γPGA polypeptide.

Claim 5 (currently amended): The conjugate of claim 1, wherein the carrier is selected from the group consisting of: ~~(a) bovine serum albumin, (b)~~ (a) recombinant *B. anthracis* protective antigen, ~~(c)~~ (b) recombinant *P. aeruginosa* exotoxin A, ~~(d)~~ (c) tetanus toxoid, ~~(e)~~ (d) diphtheria toxoid, ~~(f)~~ (e) pertussis toxoid, ~~(g)~~ (f) *C. perfringens* toxoid, ~~(h)~~ (g) hepatitis B surface antigen, ~~(i)~~ (h) hepatitis B core antigen, ~~(j)~~ (i) keyhole limpet hemocyanin, ~~(k)~~ (j) horseshoe crab hemocyanin, ~~(l)~~ (k) edestin, ~~(m)~~ (l) mammalian serum albumins, ~~(n)~~ (o) mammalian immunoglobulins~~, analogs or mimetics of (a)-(n)~~, and (p) combinations of two or more thereof.

Claim 6 (original): The conjugate of claim 1, wherein the carrier comprises recombinant *B. anthracis* protective antigen.

Claim 7 (canceled).

Claim 8 (currently amended): The conjugate of claim 1, wherein the poly-γ-glutamic acid (γPGA) polypeptide ~~comprises the D- or L-conformation~~ is the D-conformation, the L-conformation, or a mixture of the D-conformation and the L-conformation.

Claim 9 (currently amended): The conjugate of claim 1, wherein the poly-γ-glutamic acid (γPGA) polypeptide ~~comprises~~ is a γDPGA polypeptide.

Claim 10 (currently amended): The conjugate of claim 1, wherein the poly-γ-glutamic acid (γPGA) polypeptide ~~comprises~~ is a decameric γDPGA polypeptide and the carrier comprises recombinant *B. anthracis* protective antigen.

Claim 11 (previously presented): The conjugate of claim 1, wherein the carrier is covalently linked to either the amino or carboxyl terminus of the poly-γ-glutamic acid (γPGA) polypeptide.

Claim 12 (previously presented): The conjugate of claim 1, wherein the carrier is covalently linked to the poly-γ-glutamic acid (γPGA) polypeptide via a thioether, disulfide, or amide bond.

Claim 13 (previously presented): The conjugate of claim 1, wherein the density of poly-γ-glutamic acid (γPGA) polypeptide to carrier is between about 5:1 and about 32:1.

Claim 14 (previously presented): The conjugate of claim 1, wherein the density of poly-γ-glutamic acid (γPGA) polypeptide to carrier is between about 10:1 and about 15:1.

Claim 15 (original): The conjugate of claim 1, wherein the γPGA polypeptide is covalently linked to the carrier via an aldehyde (CHO)/adipic acid hydrazide (AH) linkage.

Claim 16 (currently amended): A composition comprising the conjugate of claim 1 and a pharmaceutically acceptable ~~carrier~~ vehicle.

Claim 17 (original): The composition of claim 16, further comprising an adjuvant.

Claim 18 (currently amended): A composition comprising the conjugate of claim 9 and a pharmaceutically acceptable ~~carrier~~ vehicle.

Claim 19 (original): The composition of claim 18, further comprising an adjuvant.

Claim 20 (currently amended): A method of eliciting an immune response against a *Bacillus* antigenic epitope in a subject, comprising introducing into the subject the composition of claim ~~17~~ 16, thereby eliciting an immune response in the subject.

Claim 21 (currently amended): The method of claim 20, wherein the immune response is elicited against the ~~*Bacillus* capsular~~ poly-γ-glutamic acid (γPGA) polypeptide.

Claim 22 (currently amended): The method of claim 20, wherein the immune response is elicited against the ~~*Bacillus* capsular~~ poly-γ-glutamic acid (γPGA) polypeptide and the carrier.

Claims 23-33 (canceled).

Claim 34 (currently amended): An immunogenic conjugate comprising a *Bacillus* ~~capsular~~ poly-γ-glutamic acid (γPGA) polypeptide covalently linked to a carrier, wherein the carrier is selected from the group consisting of: (a) recombinant *B. anthracis* protective antigen, (b) recombinant *P. aeruginosa* exotoxin A, (c) tetanus toxoid, (d) diphtheria toxoid, (e) pertussis toxoid, (f) *C. perfringens* toxoid, (g) hepatitis B surface antigen, (h) hepatitis B core antigen, (i) keyhole limpet hemocyanin, (j) horseshoe crab hemocyanin, (k) edestin, (l) mammalian serum albumins, ~~analogs or mimetics of (a)-(l),~~ and (m) combinations thereof, and wherein the conjugate elicits an immune response in a subject.

Claim 35 (previously presented): The conjugate of claim 34, wherein the carrier comprises recombinant *B. anthracis* protective antigen.

Claim 36 (currently amended): The conjugate of claim 34, wherein the *Bacillus* ~~capsular~~ γPGA polypeptide comprises a *B. anthracis*, *B. licheniformis*, *B. pumilus*, *or B. subtilis* γPGA polypeptide.

Claim 37 (currently amended): The conjugate of claim 34, wherein the *Bacillus* ~~capsular~~ γPGA polypeptide ~~comprises the D- or L-conformation~~ is the D-conformation, the L-conformation, or a mixture of the D-conformation and the L-conformation.

Claim 38 (currently amended): The conjugate of claim 34, wherein the *Bacillus* ~~capsular~~ γPGA polypeptide ~~comprises~~ is a *B. anthracis* capsular γDPGA polypeptide.

Claim 39 (currently amended): The conjugate of claim 34, wherein the carrier is covalently linked to either the amino or carboxyl terminus of the *Bacillus* ~~capsular~~ γPGA polypeptide.

Claim 40 (currently amended): The conjugate of claim 34, wherein the carrier is covalently linked to the *Bacillus* ~~capsular~~ γPGA polypeptide via a thioether, disulfide, or amide bond.

Claim 41 (currently amended): The conjugate of claim 34, wherein the *Bacillus* ~~capsular~~ γPGA polypeptide is covalently linked to the carrier via an aldehyde (CHO)/adipic acid hydrazide (AH) linkage.

Claim 42 (currently amended): A composition comprising the conjugate of claim 34 and a pharmaceutically acceptable ~~carrier~~ vehicle.

Claim 43 (previously presented): The composition of claim 42, further comprising an adjuvant.

Claim 44 (currently amended): A method of eliciting an immune response against a *Bacillus* antigenic epitope in a subject, comprising introducing into the subject the composition of claim ~~43~~ 42, thereby eliciting an immune response in the subject.

Claim 45 (previously presented): The method of claim 44, wherein the immune response is elicited against the *Bacillus* capsular poly-γ-glutamic acid (γPGA) polypeptide.

Claim 46 (previously presented): The method of claim 44, wherein the immune response is elicited against the *Bacillus* capsular poly-γ-glutamic acid (γPGA) polypeptide and the carrier.

Claim 47 (new): The conjugate of claim 1, wherein the carrier is a polysaccharide or a polypeptide.

Claim 48 (new): The conjugate of claim 1, wherein the carrier is a bacterial toxin or a viral protein.

Claim 49 (new): The conjugate of claim 5, wherein the carrier is selected from the group consisting of (a) recombinant *B. anthracis* protective antigen, (b) recombinant *P. aeruginosa* exotoxin A, (c) tetanus toxoid, (d) diphtheria toxoid, (e) pertussis toxoid, (f) *C. perfringens* toxoid, (g) hepatitis B surface antigen, and (h) hepatitis B core antigen.

Claim 50 (new): The conjugate of claim 9, wherein the carrier is *B. anthracis* protective antigen, and the conjugate elicits an immune response against γDPGA and against *B. anthracis* protective antigen.

Claim 51 (new): The conjugate of claim 9, wherein the conjugate elicits IgG anti-γDPGA antibodies in the subject.

Claim 52 (new): The conjugate of claim 51, wherein the conjugate also elicits IgG anti-carrier antibodies.

Claim 53 (new): The method of claim 20, wherein the immune response elicits IgG anti-*B. anthracis* γPGA antibodies and IgG anti-carrier antibodies in the subject.

Claim 54 (new): The conjugate of claim 34, wherein the carrier is selected from the group consisting of (a) recombinant *B. anthracis* protective antigen, (b) recombinant *P. aeruginosa* exotoxin A, (c) tetanus toxoid, (d) diphtheria toxoid, (e) pertussis toxoid, (f) *C. perfringens* toxoid, (g) hepatitis B surface antigen, and (h) hepatitis B core antigen.

Claim 54 (new): The conjugate of claim 38, wherein the conjugate elicits IgG anti-γDPGA antibodies and IgG anti-carrier antibodies in the subject.

Claim 55 (new): The method of claim 44, wherein the immune response elicits IgG anti-*B. anthracis* γPGA antibodies and IgG anti-carrier antibodies in the subject.

Claim 56 (new): The conjugate of claim 1, wherein the conjugate includes a plurality of γPGA polypeptide chains per carrier molecule.

Claim 57 (new): The conjugate of claim 1, wherein the conjugate has a density of γPGA chains to carrier molecule of at least about 5:1.

Claim 58 (new): The conjugate of claim 34, wherein the conjugate includes a plurality of γPGA polypeptide chains per carrier molecule.

Claim 59 (new): The conjugate of claim 34, wherein the conjugate has a density of γPGA chains to carrier molecule of at least about 5:1.

Claim 60 (new): Am immunogenic conjugate comprising poly-γ-glutamic acid (γPGA) covalently linked to a carrier, wherein the conjugate elicits an immune response in a subject, and the conjugate has a density of γPGA chains to carrier molecule of at least about 5:1.

Claim 61 (new): The conjugate of claim 56, wherein the carrier is a polymeric carrier.

Claim 62 (new): The conjugate of claim 57, wherein the carrier is a polymeric carrier.